

THE BEACON



A PAPER FOR THE SUNDAY SCHOOL
AND THE HOME



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THE TREES IN WINTER.

*Though we should be grateful for good houses,
there is no house like God's out-of-doors.*
ROBERT LOUIS STEVENSON.

*What we see depends mainly on what we
look for.*

JOHN LUBBOCK.

For The Beacon.

Winter Walks.

BY ANNE E. PERKINS.

Most of us are likely to walk very little during the winter, and the woods, especially, become unknown haunts to many. The winter is really the best time to begin the study of birds, as there are so few to be seen that a strange bird can easily be identified. Where last summer and fall a dense thicket resisted our entrance, we can now pass without hindrance. Some days the woods are beautiful with the evergreens weighted with snow, and every twig and branch of the bare trees edged "with ermine too dear for an earl."

This winter has been so free from snow that it has been favorable for winter walks. One rarely enters the woods without hearing the "Ank, ank," of white-breasted nuthatches busily circling the boles of trees, heads down or up indifferently, searching from top to bottom every crack and crevice. If I fail to hear the chickadee's cheerful "chickadee-dee" or "ts-day-day," I have only to repeat his note often enough and he always answers, and his friendly little black cap is seen not far away, curious to get a nearer view or, more likely, to share in the feasts that I bring; for I keep a good many lunch counters well supplied with crumbs, suet, nuts, etc., for the birds. Stumps make fine lunch counters, if they are high enough, and the holes and crevices in trees are made to crowd in suet, toast, and nuts; then I hang, by strings, bones, pieces of meat, and suet close to the trees.

Chickadees and nuthatches enjoy these very much, and the fat helps to keep them warm. Think of the effort it must be to support life, when the world is a wintry waste, and you will gladly share with the birds who have bravely remained with us. Now and then I meet a winter wren in brush-heaps and on stumps. He is a little blotchy, cinnamon brown bird that bobs his head up and down constantly. Many of the lunches are purloined by crows and squirrels; but, after all, it is a pleasure to feed any hungry creature, even the villanous English sparrows.

After a light snow I can see countless foot-prints, which it is fascinating to trace and speculate about. Here is a rabbit's track, broader behind, occasionally showing where he sat, there the fine tracery of wood-mice, dainty bird-tracks, but most commonly the restless wandering of squirrels up and down stumps, logs, wood-piles, trees, here and there, so that I can tell what ate the food I left the day before. A special pile of nut-shells made me look up, to see a huge nest of a red squirrel overhead, made of grape-vine tendrils, mostly. The stumps have many stems

of dried mushrooms, which the squirrels have eaten, piles of chestnut-burrs, beech-nut shells, linden seeds, with the seeds eaten and only the wings remaining; and often one can see where the old mushrooms have been recently torn off logs, so hungry do the squirrels become. The track of the mole in the snow is generally as if some small body had been pushed through it. The other day I caught one, shoving his way along through the light snow, and, when I set him free, he rooted with his pinkish snout under the rotting leaves and disappeared. How he lives is a mystery to me. Now and then one sees the disgorged pellets from an owl's stomach,—skins of mice chiefly.

Long after Thanksgiving I still found caddice worms under the ice, moving and carrying about their houses of sticks; and I put some in a little aquarium, where they broke off pieces of grass and sticks for more houses, stretching their necks out uncannily. If you have not seen any, I hope you will make their acquaintance this spring, in the brook.

Now is a good time to see cocoons on the bare branches, and, if they are healthy, they will hatch in a warm room in early spring. Birds'-nests are surprisingly numerous where we noted none during the summer,—so many dainty little vireos' and gold-finches' nests, coarse, half dismantled nests of cat-birds, wood thrushes, and indigo birds. It helps us to find them more easily next year, if we have an idea where birds build. The mosses on the fallen logs and stumps are beautiful in their variety of form and coloring, fern-like, graceful, creeping over the dead wood. In late winter and early spring are to be seen the yellow (*Tremuloides*) mushrooms and the scarlet ones, of strange shape, dazzling in the bare woods. The little partridge berries are bright when the snow is melted. In late fall I gather some vines, roots and all, that have a lot of red berries, and put some rich earth from the same spot, and some mosses, in the bottom of a little aquarium, then fit them in with care, so that, as I write, I have a little "berry ball" such as one sees in the florists' windows. They take root and grow, putting out new shoots, and the berries wax large and bright, making a pleasant spot all winter in one's room. Now and then a few drops of water are put in once a week or so, and the cover kept on tightly unless too much moisture condenses on the glass. Try it next fall before the snow comes.

The buds of the beech are very narrow and pointed. The early elder has large buds that show the flower buds, too, and open in water, if the shoots are broken off. It is a good chance to study buds, and see the difference in their shape, position on the branch, etc. The oaks still rustle the old leaves, and the witch-hazel was caught by winter with leaves and blossoms, some of which can be plainly seen. The stems of the raspberry show their white bloom, tall wandlike skeletons of cimicifuga (bugbane) loom by the pathway. A few berries of the mountain cranberry and viburnum remain, overlooked by birds.

If we dress properly for tramping, winter walks are enjoyable and disclose many things we would not otherwise learn, as the snow-shoes of the partridge and their burrows under the snowy evergreen branches. Then, too, one may see the rare evening grosbeak, the dear little winter chippies, slate-colored juncos, snow buntings that walk instead of hopping, and occasionally shore larks.

It is important and interesting to note the winter bird-life. So let us not hover too closely over the fire, but dress warmly and cultivate the habit of winter walking.

Bishop Doane on his Dog.

I am quite sure he thinks that I am God,—
Since He is God on whom each one depends
For life, and all things that His bounty
sends,—

My dear old dog, most constant of all friends;
Not quick to mind, but quicker far than I
To Him whom God I know and own. His
eye,

Deep brown and liquid, watches for my nod;
He is more patient underneath the rod
Than I, when God His wise corrections sends.
He looks love at me, deep as words e'er spake;
And from me never crumb nor sup will take
But he wags thanks with his most vocal tail;
And, when some crashing noise wakes all his
fear,

He is content and quiet if I am near,
Secure that my protection will prevail;
So, faithful, mindful, thankful, trustful, he
Tells me what I unto my God should be.

For The Beacon.

Bessie's Birthday Wish.

BY NELLIE F. MILBURN.

"How do you want to spend your birthday this year, Bessie?" asked Bessie Lane's father, as they sat together in the big window-seat awaiting the call to dinner.

"I would not want to have a party as I did last year," Bessie slowly replied. "It would just make me feel unhappy to have to sit still and watch the others running and playing."

"We will try to think of something else that you would enjoy," went on her father, kindly. "We might borrow Uncle Tom's automobile and take you a ride."

"Oh, that would not be anything new! Uncle Tom takes me often, you know. I would like to do something different."

Then she hesitated and thought over several plans before she spoke.

Bessie Lane was a sweet-tempered little girl who would be ten years old on her next birthday. Two weeks before she had slipped on some frosty steps one chilly morning and had broken the small bone in her right leg. The bone was knitting nicely, but she had to hobble about on crutches, and, as there had been snow on the ground, she had been kept in the house. She had been very patient, but it was hard to see her playmates run by on their way to school. Her little friends came to see her after school hours, but it often seemed a long day until four o'clock came.

"O father!" Bessie suddenly exclaimed, coming out of her spell of silence, "I know what I would like! I wish I could have some little girl to come to visit me for a week. You know Miss Fannie Barnett teaches in the Free Kindergarten in the city, and she often brings some of the children out to spend the day or stay over Sunday with her. I wonder if she could not find some nice little girl who could come to us. She and I could play together, and I would not be lonesome when mother is busy or away from the house."

"Why, Bessie, that is a good idea," commented Mrs. Lane, entering the room at that moment. "I'll telephone Miss Fannie

this evening. It would make some poor little city girl very happy to spend a week out here in the suburbs, where she could see the grass beginning to turn green and the leaves come out on the trees."

Miss Fannie was pleased with the plan when Mrs. Lane called her on the telephone, and said she would inquire among the families of her little pupils and try to find some one near Bessie's age, and would bring her out on the next Monday.

Bessie was very busy planning for the little visitor. A nice cot was brought down from the attic and put in Bessie's own bedroom. Her dolls were all washed and dressed and divided into two families, and the blue-and-white china tea-set put on the little table with two chairs by it, all ready for a tea-party.

On Monday afternoon Bessie sat by the window watching eagerly, and, when she heard the whistle of the four-o'clock train, she called her mother to look out of the window, so they could catch the first sight of the expected visitor.

Yes, there was the Barnett surrey, with Harry Barnett driving, and Miss Fannie and a child beside her on the back seat. As the carriage stopped at the gate, Bessie saw that the little girl was neatly dressed and had long braids of yellow hair and big blue eyes in a delicate face. Next she saw a pair of crutches, and, as Harry Barnett lifted the visitor out, Bessie exclaimed, "O mother, she has only one leg! Poor little girl!"

Mrs. Lane and Bessie greeted Miss Fannie and the child at the front door. "This is Greta Kemp," Miss Fannie told them. "She is a dear little German girl." The child smiled in a friendly fashion, and looked so clean and sweet that Bessie liked her at once. Bessie led the way to her own room, where Greta laid aside her hat and jacket and exclaimed joyfully at sight of the dolls and the pretty tea-table.

Miss Fannie lingered behind to explain to Mrs. Lane: "Greta belongs to a nice German family. She was run over by a street car a couple of months ago, and her limb was so crushed that it had to be taken off. She was a great pet at the hospital because she was so patient and good-natured. Dr. Holmes told me about her, and I thought it would do her so much good to be out here in this healthful country air for a while."

"Here, Greta," Bessie pointed to the little white cot. "This is your bed, and here is a drawer in my bureau and a place to hang your clothes in the closet. I have divided my dolls, and part of them are to be yours to play with while you are here. I have a Teddy Bear and a Billy Possum. Now choose which dolls and which pet you want."

"O such lovely dolls and such a funny bear!" cried Greta in pretty, broken English. "O dear Bessie, how kind you are to let me have your children. I'll just adopt them for a week," and she laughed merrily.

The next day was Bessie's birthday. When she awoke, she found a beautiful new doll in a pink silk dress trimmed with lace by the side of her bed, and by Greta's bed was another doll just as pretty as Bessie's, but dressed in blue silk.

"Oh, these are from grandma, I know," Bessie gleefully shouted as she hobbled over to Greta's bed to compare the dollies. "Grandma asked me last week which I liked best, pink or blue, and I said 'pink.'"

"Is this really mine?" asked Greta. "Mine for ever and ever to keep? Oh, I like



THE RETURN OF JESUS FROM
GALILEE—WILLIAM HOLE.

blue the best, and I just love dolls with golden curls."

A box of candy, a book of fairy stories, and a game was found at each little girl's plate at breakfast time, and Greta was so excited she could hardly eat her oatmeal and cream.

They spent a merry morning with their new dolls, and gave them a luncheon of candy and wafers so that all the doll families could become acquainted.

After dinner Uncle Tom came with his automobile and took the girls and the new dolls for a nice ride into the country. Greta had never been in an automobile before, and, though she looked frightened at first, she soon began to enjoy the rapid motion, and laughed gayly as they flew past the farmhouses.

On their return they found Lillie and Mabel Morton and Daisy Jaynes, three of Bessie's schoolmates, who had brought their dolls and come to spend an hour and take tea with them.

Greta was so merry and good-natured and lisped in broken English in such a pretty way that all the little girls were delighted to know her.

They had a jolly time until eight o'clock, when Mr. Morton and Mr. Jaynes came to take their little daughters home.

The week passed by very quickly, for the little girls found so much amusement in playing dolls and reading their new books aloud to each other.

When Saturday came, Bessie was sorry to say good-bye to Greta, but the doctor thought that they could both now safely go back to school, and Greta's parents wanted her to be at home.

However, Mrs. Lane has promised that Greta shall come out often to stay over Sunday with them; and, when the summer vacation comes, Greta is to be asked to spend a month. "I'll count the days till you come again, Greta," cried Bessie as she waved her good-bye.

"Me, too; and thank you for the lovely, lovely week," Greta called back to her.

Illustrating Stories.

The following story is one of a series to be published in *The Beacon* for the sake of encouraging imaginative drawing. All readers of *The Beacon*, both those who like to draw and those who think they have forgotten how to hold a pencil, are invited to contribute illustrations for this series of stories. Each story should suggest several pictures. For example, in "The Promise of Jehovah," one reader may see Abraham's caravan crossing the plain to the "misty blue hills"; another may picture him under the oaks of Shechem; a third may think of him as standing alone on the hill-top at sunset.

The writer hopes for a generous response, looking forward to possible exhibitions of such illustrations at the May meetings in Boston, or at Sunday-school Institutes. She also hopes that *The Beacon* may from time to time reproduce the best drawings. They will not be judged according to art school standards: they need not be finished drawings, or even clever sketches. They may be only diagrams, with straight lines for figures of people. But they must at least suggest a picture which shall illustrate some point in the story.

Occasionally, a picture will be printed with the request that a story be written about it. Such stories will receive the same consideration as the illustrations.

Both pictures and stories must be original. The editor reserves the right to keep those selected for purposes of exhibition or reproduction; but they will eventually be returned if the contributors so desire. Drawings for reproduction should be in black and white—preferably pen and ink; but it is hoped that this will not discourage colored illustrations, which would be especially effective in exhibitions.

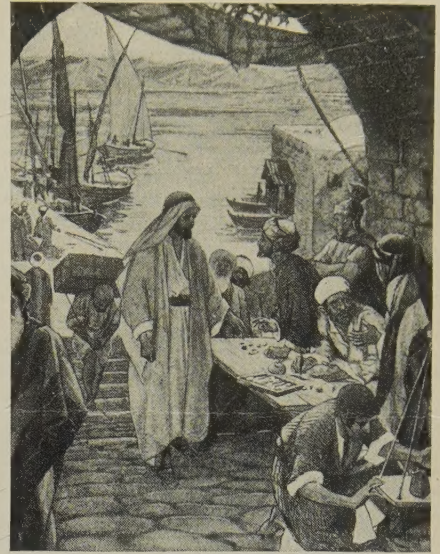
All contributions should be sent to Miss Frances M. Dadmun, 25 Beacon Street, Boston, Mass.

THE PROMISE OF JEHOVAH.

Abraham, founder of the Hebrew nation, was a direct descendant of Shem, Noah's oldest son. This branch of the family had inherited as a dwelling-place a pleasant hill country east of the broad river Euphrates. Abraham was also heir to something better than a comfortable home. From the time when he was a little boy, he had had a companion whom the Hebrews call Jehovah, and whom we call God. Like Noah, whenever Abraham was quiet, he felt that Jehovah was beside him, and, although he could not see or touch him, he believed that he could often hear Jehovah speaking to him, telling him what to do. Abraham's belief was unusual at that particular time because most of his neighbors worshiped the sun, moon, and stars. These were truly marvelous; but the moon was not more beautiful, the stars more mysterious, the sunshine more comforting than that unseen presence of Jehovah was to Abraham.

Abraham had also inherited a love of wandering. His father's family had already moved once, from Ur of the Chaldees to Haran. But Abraham wished to move again. He thought of the wide, unknown country toward the west, and how exciting it would be to pack all his goods on the backs of camels and go away from the bright-colored altars of the Chaldeans to the misty blue plains beyond the river. There he would build altars of his own to Jehovah, and found a nation under Jehovah's protection. He was sure that he heard God's voice telling him to go.

He started from Haran with Sarah, his wife, and Lot, his nephew; and with them went their families and servants. Sarah had no children and looked wistfully at Lot's daughters. Abraham had confided to her his hopes of founding a nation in a new country; but how sad it would be if they



MATTHEW CALLED FROM THE
RECEIPT OF CUSTOM—WILLIAM HOLE.

should have no children of their own! Sarah had a good deal of family pride, and longed for a son to carry on Abraham's name, and inherit his property.

They left the hills of Haran behind them and crossed the Euphrates, their faces toward the south-west. Sarah and Lot's wife, riding in the very centre of the caravan for protection, looked over the humps of camels, back to the country they were leaving, and then forward to the unknown plain, and they shivered a little with homesickness. For they were women, and cared more for the houses of Chaldea than for wandering and living in tents.

After long days of journeying slowly, so that the sheep and oxen might keep up with the camels, they crossed the Jordan to the land of Canaan, and rested at Shechem. Abraham, sitting in the cool shadow of a sturdy oak, heard Jehovah telling him that this was to be his future home. So he collected all the stones he could find and made a heap of them, with a wide, flat one on top for an altar. There Abraham and Sarah, Lot and his family, with all their herdsman and servants, worshiped in the still evening, thanking Jehovah for bringing them so far in safety.

But their wanderings were not over yet. There were native tribes lurking about, who were savage and unfriendly, and, although Abraham might have taken the land by force, there was a famine that year, and such a company as his could not have found enough to eat. So he again turned his face to the south, and after building another altar, at a place afterward called Bethel, he journeyed into Egypt. He knew it to be a rich and fertile country, from the caravans which sometimes came from there. He had heard much, too, from the same source, of the wonders of Egypt, so he was not sorry to have such a good excuse to visit it. He found it all that he had expected and more, but, although he was well treated there, he was not altogether happy, and, when the famine was over, he started back to Canaan, the land promised to him by Jehovah.

And Sarah and Lot's wife, riding again in the centre, could hardly see the end of the oxen and sheep, the asses and camels, there were so many.

Such extensive possessions were good to

"Who works for glory misses off the goal,
Who works for money coins his very soul.
Work for the work's sake, then, and it may be
All these things shall be added unto thee."

have as long as they were traveling through a wide and open country; but when they came back to Bethel and wished to settle, it was a different matter. It seemed an utter impossibility to find enough grazing ground for all those flocks and herds. The men in charge quite lost their tempers about it, and Abraham's servants quarreled with Lot's for the best places. Abraham knew that this would never do, so he consulted with Lot as to the wisdom of their separating.

"Surely," he said, "the herdsmen of relatives should not quarrel, and there is somewhere land enough for us both."

And Abraham, acting from the promptings of his generous heart, gave Lot first choice.

Lot sat down and looked the prospect over. On the west, to be sure, was Canaan, the Promised Land; but it was hilly, with rocks and a scrubby growth of bushes, and did not look very fertile. He foresaw that his cattle would grow thin in such barren pastures. To the east was the Plain of Jordan, so green that it resembled the cultivated gardens they had seen in Egypt. Lot was tired. He had come far under the hot sun, and the sight of those green fields was like water to dry lips. The idea of struggling for a living was hateful to him just then. So he chose the plain, and, separating his flocks and herds from Abraham's, went down to the Jordan and pitched his tents near a city called Sodom.

Abraham was neither surprised nor disturbed at Lot's choice. He sat a little while on the hill-top, after Lot had gone; then he stood up, and looked toward the south, to the road he had just passed over; to the east, where Lot was going; to the north, over ridges and hills; to the west, where peaks showed black against an orange sunset. As he looked, he heard Jehovah saying:

"All the land which thou seest, to thee will I give it, and to thy heirs forever."

Abraham knew it to be a promise. Full of faith, he went up to Hebron and pitched his tents under the oaks of Mamre.

For The Beacon.

At Otter Lake.

BY CHARLES W. CASSON.

About two miles north of the little village of Greenfield, in New Hampshire, is a beautiful stretch of water called Otter Lake. It is small in size, and almost hidden by the woods that grow all around it. From the railway that passes quite close to one side of it you can catch just a glimpse of the lake as the train flashes along. Unless you knew it was there, and were looking for it, you would probably not know that any such lake existed.

My first visit to it was one time when I took a Boys' Brigade there for a two weeks' camping trip. About twenty-five boys went along, and, if the lake was usually a quiet place, it certainly was noisy enough as long as we camped on the shore. I was much too busy to enjoy the beauty of the lake, in my attempt to bring all the boys back alive.

But late that summer, remembering how pretty a place it was, a friend and I went up there for a week's rest and fishing. We camped out in a little tent near a pine grove, and spent one of the finest weeks of my whole life.

One cannot be out in the open for a week without learning many lessons. All of nature is one great, open-air school, and the oldest of us are just pupils in it. We only need to keep our eyes and minds open, and we shall learn many truths that were not so clear before.

One afternoon I was spending an hour or so out on the lake. Sunday was coming, and I had to return home to preach upon that day. So I took my pad with me and anchored the boat in the very centre of the little lake, and started to prepare my sermon. The title I had chosen was "The Reality of God."

Writing the topic upon the pad, I lay back in the boat to think. As I lay there, it seemed as though Nature were speaking to me. The little waves made music on the bow of the boat; the gentle breeze breathed upon me; the sunlight strewed diamonds over the surface of the water; the white sand of the shore formed a white ring against the green; the woods, with here and there a tree showing autumn color, surrounded me with a green wall; the far-away mountains showed dimly through the haze of distance; and above all was the glorious blue sky, filled with the gold of the sunlight.

And I found myself asking, as I looked upon the beauty and the wonder of it all, and thought how great must be the mind that planned and the power that created such a picture, "Who made all of this?" And there came the answer, just as clearly as these words are printed upon this page, and the answer was the word that I had written upon the pad upon my knee. It was the word "God."

I could have had no greater proof of God. All the books in the world could not have told me more, or made me more sure. And out there on Otter Lake that day I knew that God was, and that God was good.

And so, when you feel a little uncertain about God, and hear or read denials of God's life and love, just steal off to some Otter Lake, and untie the old boat by the tree on the shore, and anchor in the middle of the lake, and, after you have seen all the beauty of the place, just ask, "Who made all this beauty?" And I am sure that the same answer will come to you, and the answer will be "God."

Who's Afraid in the Dark?

"Not I!" said the owl,
And he gave a great scowl,
And wiped his eye,
And fluffed his jowl.

"Tu whoo!"

Said the dog: "I bark
Out loud in the dark.
Boo-oo!"

Said the cat: "Mi-iew!
I'll scratch any who
Dare say that I do
Feel afraid.

Mi-iew!"

"Afraid," said the mouse,
"Of the dark in a house?
Hear me scatter
Whatever's the matter.
Squeak!"

Then the toad in his hole,
And the mole in the ground,
They both shook their heads
And passed the word round;
And the bird in the tree,
The fish, and the bee
They declared, all three,
That you never did see
One of them afraid

In the dark!

But the little girl who had gone to bed
Just raised the bedclothes and covered her
head.
Woman's Life.

RECREATION CORNER.

ENIGMA XXXIX.

I am composed of 16 letters.

My 5, 12, 7, 16, is a measurement of time.

My 13, 1, 11, 2, 4, is to applaud.

My 9, 7, 8, 15, is to have courage.

My 10, 4, 7, 3, 13, 14, is the offshoot of anything.

My 6, 8, 15, 3, 13, 14, is a violent twist.

My whole is a noted divine of the last century.

PAULINE DODGE.

ENIGMA XL.

I am composed of 10 letters.

My 7, 9, 8, 5, is to work.

My 3, 2, 8, 5, is a covering for the face.

My 10, 6, 7, is a boy's nickname.

My 7, 6, 5, 2, is a story.

My 7, 4, 10, is a numeral.

My 1, 6, 7, is a small animal.

My whole is a book in the Bible.

BESSIE KEITH.

A RIDDLE.

By letters eight I'm always named,
I use one-thirty-two;
On chapel walls I'm often framed,
And learned by heart by you.

On Sundays oft you study me;
I'm taught on Beacon Hill;
Though parts in other sects you see
I'm Unitarian still.

My whole belongs to you and me;
Without good works I'm dead;
But live by me and you shall be
Through life victorious led.

F. W. B.

INITIALS.

Entire, I trouble you with pain;
With h, I rattle on the roof;
With m, a service millions use;
With n, your fingers furnish proof;
With r, I am a bar of steel;
With s, a sailing craft I speed;
With t, I'm bushy, if a squirrel's;
With w, I weep, indeed.

Youth's Companion.

ANSWERS TO PUZZLES IN NO. 20.

ENIGMA XXXV.—West Virginia.

ENIGMA XXXVI.—William Tecumseh Sherman.

A FEAST OF GOOD THINGS.—1. Turkey, 2. Quail. 3. Cauliflower. 4. Tongue. 5. Deviled Crabs. 6. Punch. 7. Pie. 8. Peas. 9. Lamb. 10. Rabbit. 11. Olives. 12. Dates.

HIDDEN RIVERS.—1. Nile. 2. Indus. 3. Elbe. 4. Rhine. 5. Po. 6. Dwina. 7. Saco. 8. Ohio. 9. Delaware. 10. Orinoco.

I do not know of any way so sure of making others happy as being so one's self.

SIR ARTHUR HELPS.

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